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# JAPAN today



At General Synod, *Sei Ko Kwai's* Presiding Bishop sits between J. Earl Fowler and the Hon. Francis B. Sayre



Seminarians (right) in procession at Central Theological School



Schools and orphanages have important postwar role

THE EYES OF TODAY'S CHRISTIAN WORLD TURN to Japan in recognition of an unprecedented opportunity to make Christ known to eighty-five million islanders on the periphery of Asia. The eyes of today's Free World turn to Japan with hope and encouragement as this ancient and almost unique nation experiences democracy for the first time.

Since World War II, Japan has played an increasingly important role in the Free World, and today it is one of the strongholds of democracy in the Far East, a bulwark against the materialistic atheism that has swept across the mainland of Asia. This ideology is in direct conflict with the spirit of democracy and Christianity. The Japanese are friendly toward the United States, an example of democracy, and they look to the United States for Christianity which is the spiritual basis of democracy.

The Rt. Rev. Henry Knox Sherrill, after his recent visit to Japan, said, "Whatever may be said of the old religions of other days, I am confident that their spiritual force and power have gone. At the best level of the fine and cultured Japanese, there is a longing, I think, for something more; their religion, so far as Shintoism is concerned, is a matter of national custom. But there is, beyond any question, a great void, and where there is a void, seven spirits more evil are apt to move in."

Never before have the Japanese been so receptive to Christianity. Yet less than one-half of one per cent of the total population is Christian.

Many churches have recognized the missionary

responsibility and opportunity in Japan. The chief concern of the Episcopal Church is the *Sei Ko Kwai* (the Holy Catholic Church in Japan). An independent Church which grew out of the missionary efforts of the American Episcopal Church, the Church of England, and the Church of England in Canada, the *Sei Ko Kwai* consists of ten dioceses, each with its own Japanese bishop. It has about 270 clergy and lay readers. Recent statistics showed approximately thirty-two thousand baptized persons, fifteen thousand communicants. The Rt. Rev. Michael H. Yashiro, Bishop of Kobe, is Presiding Bishop.

Bishop Sherrill says that "the one thing we must not do is to expect the Japanese Church to be an American Church. It must be a Japanese Church, governed by Japanese bishops and clergy and lay people. They must make their contribution to the total picture of Christ who is above every nation, above the West, above the East, who came to draw all men to Him. They need encouragement along the lines of feeling that it is a Japanese Church and that we look for a Far Eastern interpretation of what Christ means to them, and then through them, a more total picture of what Christianity is to all people."

The American Church can co-operate with the *Sei Ko Kwai* by supplying two needed assets, money and manpower: funds to aid construction, supplement salaries for clergy who receive barely living wages, and support church schools, and missionaries to fill key positions.



St. Luke's College of Nursing students leave chapel after capping



Roof goes on Hiroshima's new Church of the Resurrection



English class at St. Agnes' School, Kyoto

## On the Threshold of Advance

AT the end of World War II, the *Sei Ko Kwai* faced the task of rebuilding almost one third of its churches which had been destroyed. Many congregations and clergy were scattered. All was lost except faith in God. Today most of the reconstruction is complete, and the *Sei Ko Kwai* is on the threshold of a period of advance. With renewed vigor the Church in Japan is making every effort possible to provide sufficient clergy and churches to reach even a small part of the unchurched Japanese. The Church in Japan is securely rooted but needs help to develop into maturity.

The new administrative headquarters of the Japanese National Council was opened in October, 1953, and an active diocesan building program, aided by BUILDERS FOR CHRIST, calls for the erection of a large church in each of seven dioceses, thus strengthening the Church physically and providing new outlets for missionary work.

## Schools: Backbone of the Future

SCHOOLS, the backbone of any nation's future, are an important contact with the unchurched. Among the fine educational institutions of the Church are four high schools for boys, five high schools for girls, five primary schools, five orphanages, a large number of kindergartens, and several rural and welfare settlements. Many of these schools are expanding in order to take care of larger enrollments.

St. Luke's Hospital School of Nursing, which



went into temporary quarters when the United States Occupational Forces took over St. Luke's Hospital, is now installed in a block of buildings vacated by the Army, adjacent to the hospital. This school is one of the best of its kind.

Central Theological College has moved into permanent quarters in a Tokyo suburb, which has room for expansion. Here about twenty students are preparing for Holy Orders.

In northern Japan, a Christian student center is being built at Sapporo, near the government university, to win the students of that university to a knowledge of Jesus Christ, and if this proves successful, the Church hopes to build a similar center at each of the four former Imperial Universities.

### **St. Paul's: A Major Influence**

ST. PAUL'S University in Tokyo is one of the major influences in Japan. Although only ten per cent of the students are Christians when they matriculate, about forty-five per cent are Christians when they reach graduation. Each year from one to two hundred students are baptized in the university chapel. Ninety per cent of the clergy and bishops in Japan are graduates of St. Paul's, and from St. Paul's emerge Christian leaders in business, law, arts, and the sciences.

These leaders, united with other Christians of Japan, are working together, sharing the responsibility for the spiritual rebirth of their country where the effects of war, only a few years away, are still evident.

Today, in the manner of the early Christians,

the members of the *Sei Ko Kwai* themselves have set forth to win Japan to Christ. At the synod in April, 1953, a Laymen's Evangelization Movement was initiated to be carried on throughout Japan. In each diocese an intensive laymen's movement has been organized which will have far-reaching effects. Through the work of consecrated laymen the *Sei Ko Kwai* can transcend physical limitations and reach thousands of unchurched Japanese.

### The Forces of God Go Forward

"THE forces of God are unmistakably on the march," reported the Hon. Francis B. Sayre, recently Bishop Sherrill's personal representative to Japan. "The picture of Japan which I take home is one of matchless opportunity for the cause of Christianity. A Christian Japan could turn the tide of history in Asia. In many ways Japan today is one of the most strategic and critical spots in the world . . . Christianity can conquer Japan today. But it will take the full measure of our strength. And the time is running fast."



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